

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MENSA CHRONICLE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	Schedule of Mensa Events
4	From the Loc Sec
5	Games
6	November Dinner
8	Commentary
9	Puzzles
11	Word Check
	Synonym Sense
13	Noted and Quoted
14	Treasury Report
	Chapter Notes
15	Member Advertisements
16	List of Officers

If you or someone you know would like to be a speaker at our monthly dinner, please contact Jim Mizera at 203-522-1959 or Jmizera@hotmail.com. The dinner is held the third Saturday of the month.



ARCHIVED COPIES OF THE CHRONICLE

going back to 2000 are available on the Internet at <http://scm66.org>. You can download the latest e-mail version of the Chronicle there, as well as previous issues.

SCM CHAPTER EVENTS - JANUARY

Friday, January 10, 7:00 pm

Danbury Dinner - Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner

at John's Best Pizza, Shop Rite Plaza, Federal Road, Danbury. Interested M's should contact Ward Mazzucco at 203-744-1929, ext 25, wjm@danburylaw.com or Rev. Bill Loring at 203-794-1389, fr.bill@comcast.net for info on location and/or reservations.

Saturday, January 11, 4:00 - 10:00 pm

Games Gathering

Try out some of the chapter's games with your guest(s) or other members and guests in attendance. Contact Deb on locsec@rocketmail.com for details and directions.

Sunday, January, 12 3:00

Hockey

The Bridgeport Sound Tigers host the Hartford Wolfpack at the Webster Bank Arena in downtown Bridgeport. Contact Jim Mizera ahead of time at jmizera@hotmail.com or e-mail or text (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info.

Tuesday, January, 14, 6:30

Post Road Dinner

King and I restaurant, 260 Post Rd., Fairfield, CT 06820. Contact Jim Mizera at jmizera@hotmail.com or e-mail or text (203) 522-1959 for reservations or info.

Saturday, January 18, 6:30

Monthly Dinner

The PUTNAM HOUSE Restaurant, 12 Depot

Admitted in CT, NY & OR

Sharon Oberst DeFala, Esq.
GENERAL PRACTICE OF LAW

<p>Law Offices Gary Oberst A Professional Corporation 111 East Avenue Norwalk, CT 06851</p>	<p>Office (203) 866-4646 Home (203) 852-9571 Fax (203) 852-1574 sharon@oberstlaw.com</p>
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Place, Bethel, CT 06801 (downtown - across from old railroad station). Author and world traveler Jerry Brooker, a member of Southern CT Mensan for two decades, will speak about his recent trip to Syrian refugee camps in Jordan and his talk before the Trans-generational Trauma conference in Amman. Jerry has photos of the trip to show and will tell us about his visit to the refugee camps with the Patch Adams Clowns.

At the conference, Jerry gave a short talk "The Journey from Ordinary to Extraordinary", geared towards Sunni Muslim medical professionals who are developing a healthcare structure in the camps. At his January presentation for us, Jerry will pose questions from his 2013 conference presentation. We will consider matters such as how we respond to failure: do we let it undermine our progress and potential or do we find ways to overcome it?

CONNECTICUT AND WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER EVENTS

This is not a complete listing WE - Weekly Event, ME - Monthly Event, YE - Yearly Event

JANUARY

2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Thursdays 6:30 pm

Scrabble

The word-loving Mensans (are there any other kind?) and non-Mensans gather to play Scrabble at Panera Bread Restaurant at Bishop's Corner, 2542 Albany Ave., West Hartford. For more info contact Lois Cappellano 413-567-4702

3 Friday 5:30 pm

Happy Hour in Wallingford

(ME, 1st Fridays) Ann Polanski (contact her at 203-269-4565 or cell 860-817-9910 or ann.polanski@comcast.net) at The Old Dublin, 171 Quinipiac Street, Wallingford, CT 06492, 203-949-8022, www.theolddublin.com

From Route 15: Take exit 64 toward Wallingford/ Downtown, Sharp right at Quinipiac Street, At 0.3 miles turn left to stay on Quinipiac Street. The Old Dublin will be on the left about 0.3 miles from where you turned

left.

From I-91: Take I-91 to exit 13 Turn right at end of exit onto South Colony Road. At about 0.2 miles, turn left onto Quinnipiac Street (Wallingford center, just before the gazebo). The Old Dublin will be on your right within about two blocks.

8 Wednesday 5:30 pm

Shoreline Happy Hour

(ME, 2nd Wednesday) at Donovan's Reef 1212 Main Street, Branford Conn. 06405. The Donovan's Reef www.donovans-reef.com web site has a small map, and here are some directions with distances - from I-95 take exit 54/ Cedar Street. Go south on Cedar Street crossing Rt. 1/Boston Post Road for about 0.5 mi. to Rose Street. Take a left on Rose and go 0.25 mi. to a driveway on the right where you will enter the parking lot for a number of businesses in a complex known as Lockworks Square. Drive part way through the lot and look for Donovan's Reef on the left. Locals can also enter Lockworks Square from the Ivy Street side just off of Main Street. The lounge is on the left inside. I usually have a table reservation and will likely have an "M" sign visible. We start around 5:30. There are free daily bar goodies along with any items that you may want to order from the comprehensive menu. Donovan's phone number is 203-488-5573. We have a great time talking about anything and everything. Hope to see you there! Questions? Contact Mike Wilson at 203-481-2858 or MahoutMike@aol.com

16 Thursday 6:30 pm

Pioneer Valley Dinner, West Springfield, MA

(ME, 3rd Thursday) Email Ian Fraser (ianfraser@usa.net) for more information, directions, or to RSVP. As always, new members and guests are encouraged to attend this always friendly and interesting event. We hope to see you there!

24 Friday 5:00 pm

Fourth Friday Happy Hour

Happy Hour (ME, 4th Friday) at The Playwright in Hamden, <http://www.playwrightirishpub.com> Come on down and join us this month, we'd love to see ya. Contact Gail Trowbridge 203-877-4472 or gail_trowbridge@yahoo.com

FROM THE LOCSEC

The end of 2013 brings the beginning of 2014!

During 2013 we continued with our monthly dinners, and with our participation in CultureQuest®. We also grew our membership, started a monthly games event, resumed monthly administration of the Mensa Admission Test, enhanced our Scholarship Program, and participated in Connecticut's Regional Gathering of Mensans as a sponsor.

Your Chapter Management Volunteers

As our chapter's Local Secretary, I could not comment on 2013 without mentioning some of our members in particular who continued to volunteer time on behalf of our chapter. One is our Newsletter Publisher Amy Harold - whose name you will likely recognize as the person who prepares and sends out the Chronicle and reminders about events.

Another is Jim Mizera, our VP / Newsletter editor, who coordinates our dinners and other events and also compiles and edits the Chronicle. Jim and Amy help contribute notably to helping us stay informed about our chapter. Elizabeth Marks Cortright serves as our Treasurer in addition to managing a full personal, professional, and volunteer schedule. Joan Coprio is again working as our chapter's Scholarship Chair, and is looking to work along side a few other chapter members in January to identify worthy candidates for our Mensa Awarded Scholarships.

One thing I would like to share is an observation about the diligence and consideration with which these members operate. Questions come up throughout the year, and even given my background of working with Boards, risk management, and due diligence – I've always been impressed by the thought, research and discussion that goes in to every decision made for the chapter. There is always an opportunity for involvement by more of our members.

Members are Interested in What You Have to Say
Mensa is a social organization. One of our goals is to facilitate interaction between members, and we do this through various events. We are always looking for new ideas.

Based on my personal experience, I can say that we not only have some fantastic long-time members, but also some great new members. We will

look continue to solicit input for our newsletter. If there's something of interest that you'd like to share with the chapter, send it on to Jim. Many members say that it is interesting to hear about others' thoughts, interests, and experiences.

Over the past few months (probably influenced by my association with the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Awards program and continuous improvement), I've asked members what, if anything, they started doing differently recently. Responses included: Diet, exercise, changes in work practices, getting more organized, prioritizing, focusing on goals, getting rid of 'stuff', simplifying, and trying to accomplish more by doing less.

Of course this was just an informal verbal 'survey'. One thing we thought we would try is asking our members a monthly question. This would be a survey with just one question (i.e., it wouldn't take much of your time), and the results would be shared with the chapter in the following month's newsletter. The goal is not to ask about the chapter itself; you can always email any of us with suggestions, events you'd like to sponsor, or ideas. The idea is to solicit input from our members to share with other members (probably anonymously unless you prefer otherwise).

Since it's the beginning of a new year, our first question is "What is one thing you would really like to do during 2014?"

You can participate in the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CKB6M5Y>

Looking forward to 2014, we see many of the Regional Gatherings of Mensans in the North East take place during February through May. Many, MANY people attend, or started attending, without knowing any one else. It's a chance to meet other members, listen to presentations, share a meal, play some games, or just have a chat or two. Volunteering at an RG also makes meeting people easier. Also coming up are CultureQuest®, Mind Games (this year in Austin), and this time the Annual Gathering will be relatively close - in Boston. In the meantime, have a good January! It's a good year to get involved and take advantage of of what Mensa has to offer.

Deb Jennings

GAMES*by Tom Thomas*

Ahoy!

I am writing about some of the recent games that I have been playing, primarily with other Mensans at various RGs.

Suburbia was published in 2012, by Bezier Games. It is a city-building game, for one-to-four players, where each planner tries to make the strongest possible economy in his suburb. Octagonal tiles become available for purchase, with an initial price that will drop the longer it remains unpurchased. Random additional goals are placed at the start of the game, plus each player will be dealt two in secret, of which he keeps one. The suburb is rated on income generated and reputation. Total population is also a factor in the final tally, as is achieving various goals randomly drawn in the game. The game plays out in about ninety minutes, and there is an expansion set available with different tiles.

7 Wonders was published in the U.S. in 2010 by Repos Productions. Two-to-seven players randomly draw an ancient society which built a great wonder. The game is played in a series of three hands of cards, from which players pay to place a card from their hand next to their wonder. Payment may be in gold coins, or in resources. Each society has free access to one of the seven resources, and may either develop access to other resources, or purchase them from their neighbors on either side. After selecting the card that they will play on the current turn, they then pass their hand to one neighbor, and take the hand from the other neighbor. At the end of the third hand, points are scored for each society based upon the development of their military, treasury, civic buildings, commercial buildings, science, and other categories. This game is also quick, about an hour or less among veteran players.

Village was published in 2011. The time is medieval, and it is a worker placement game for two-to-four players. Each player directs the work of a family over the course of a few generations. The player determines what each family member will do professionally. He can direct one to enter the clergy, or a trade, or travel or such. He continues to direct the token of that character until his death. If the character achieves a high enough status in his life, he will be entered into "The Book." At the end of the game, several factors, achieved by the many family members, are weighed to determine the winner. I am not yet familiar enough with this game to play it in under two hours, but I expect it to turn into a ninety minute game.

Cards Against Humanity, self-published in 2009, is not a strategy game, but a party game for four to ten or so people. It tends to be a late night game, often the last one played at Mensa gatherings. It is sort of an X-rated version of "Apples to Apples". One player reads a black card with a blank in its text. All of the other players look at the ten white cards in their hand to find the words that they think will strike the judge as the funniest response. Players can enter and leave the game at will, and end game generally comes when folks are tired of playing, and just want to turn in. Warning: Many of the cards are politically incorrect or downright shocking.

The best source for information about these and all other games is www.BoardGameGeek.com

Happy gaming.

THE NOVEMBER DINNER

THE WORD GAP

At Southern CT Mensa's last monthly dinner of 2013, a small group came to watch a short video and participate in a discussion on what has been called "the Thirty Million Word Gap." The word gap in question is the estimated difference in the number of words heard in the first four years of life by children of families in the lowest socio-economic group and the number heard by children in higher income families. According to studies, this deficit leaves poor children with meager vocabularies when they enter school and hinders most of them in learning to read well.

The Mensans at our dinner were interested in the problem and what some pediatricians and child psychologists have been doing to alleviate it. During our discussion, several members reflected on their upbringing and how it may have affected their vocabulary development and reading abilities.

CONVERSATION IS THE KEY

The four-minute video we watched after dinner was taken from the 2011 California Summit on Pre-School Education. The speaker in the presentation, Susan True, then Executive Director of First Five Santa Cruz County, summarized the landmark work of University of Kansas child psychologists Dr. Todd Risley and the late Dr. Betty Hart that investigated the conversation between parents and children during infants' first three years of life. For three years, Hart and Risley visited 42 families in three different economic groups - welfare, working-class, and professional-class - for an hour each month and recorded every word of dialogue between parent and child. They then spent almost a decade analyzing these transcripts and checking on the kids' academic progress. In 1995, they published a book "Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children," which described the results of their study.

Hart and Risley's study made the point that education begins with conversations long before pre-kindergarten but that many parents don't

seem to realize it. The two professors found out that parents and children conversed much less in the welfare-class families than they did in the working-class families and in the professional-class families, and it made an enormous difference in the kids' later learning at school. Their recordings showed that children in the welfare group heard about 615 words per hour, children in the working class group heard approximately 1,250 words per hour, and children in the professional-class group heard roughly 2,150 words per hour. Extrapolating those results to a full day and projecting out four years, Hart and Risley estimated that before entering school, children in the lowest-income families were hearing about 32 million fewer words than their upper-income counterparts did.

That wasn't the only bad news. The quality of conversation between parents and children in low-income groups was also much poorer. Welfare kids heard only 5 questions per hour, while kids in working-class families heard 20 questions an hour, and children of professionals heard 40 questions per hour. As Ms. True pointed out, open-ended questions followed by discussion engage children's brains, giving them a chance to use words, think ideas through, and build neural connections - in short, to exercise their minds. But instead of asking questions, parents in welfare families issued commands and demands toward their children.

Commands and demands are often phrased very negatively and the charts summarizing the Hart-Risley study brought this out: not only did the kids in working class and affluent families hear more words than the lower-income family kids did, they heard far more positive words. The data showed that welfare mothers made more than twice as many negative statements as positive statements to their kids. Working-class parents did nearly the reverse, however, making 12 positive statements for every 7 negative statements. Professional-class parents spoke even more positively - they averaged an astonishing 6 positive statements for every negative statement. It's not hard to see why their kids might enjoy conversation and trust adults more than their lower-income counterparts would.

CONVERSATION - THE ROAD TO READING

How does limited conversation affect kids' academic progress? As Susan True noted, children need to know about 10,000 -12,000 words to become good readers. But in Risley & Hart's study, the kids from welfare families knew only about 2,000 words when they entered kindergarten. Their working-class counterparts had a vastly larger vocabulary - 12,000 words - adequate to learn reading, but still much less than that of the children of professionals, who knew 20,000 words before beginning kindergarten. Not surprisingly, the lower-socioeconomic group kids had more problems with reading in elementary school than higher-socioeconomic group kids did. As Sara Neufeld, writing in the Columbia University Teachers College's Hechinger Report, said, "Children aren't born smart. They're made smart by conversation."

After the video, we looked at some charts provided by other researchers who traced the progress of kids with reading problems in their early school years. The results were not encouraging. One study of over 50 poor first-grade readers found that nearly 90% of them were still poor readers in fourth grade. Taking it further, some studies have shown that about 75% of the students with reading problems in third grade failed to improve much by 9th grade. So if not talking to kids leads to stunts their early reading ability, it will probably impair their reading throughout their scholastic careers.

FOLLOWING UP ON HART-RISLEY

Some researchers have replicated Hart and Risley's research using more advanced technology and a bigger sample. For instance, in 2006, the LENA (Learning Environmental Analysis) Natural Language Study tracked the conversation of children in 329 families for 12 hours a day by attaching small recording devices to the kids. LENA also used technology to filter out background noise and analyze the data. Their researchers were able to process data more quickly than Hart and Risley did back in the 1980s and 1990s, and published their results in 2008. LENA's study largely confirmed Hart and Risley's findings, although it decreased the estimated word count for high-income families by a

third. The LENA team also found out the more words kids heard directly spoken to them by their parents, the better they did on language tests.

EFFORTS TO OVERCOME THE WORD GAP

LENA's psychologists found that if they met monthly with parents, they could get them to boost the number of words their kids heard by over 50%. It's probably important that pediatricians and child psychologists meet with new parents regularly because, as LENA's research found out, parents have difficulty estimating how much they talk to their kids. Along these lines, the city of Providence, Rhode Island, working with Brown University researchers, has started a small sample program to coach parents on how to improve their children's language development. They aim to expand over the next few years. Several cities have begun similar programs with low-income families.

QUESTIONS AND REFLECTIONS

Some people who watched the presentation asked whether researchers have studied whether older siblings or television help very young children gain skill with words. The data we looked at did not examine these questions. But one chart showed that popular children's shows actually use almost as many rare words per 100 words spoken as adult shows do and more than college graduates do when talking to family and friends. This sounds promising, but since TV is a passive medium and doesn't engage youngsters in two-way conversation, its benefits may be small.

The Mensans at our dinner seemed to have had different experiences as children listening to and conversing with adults and this influenced their views on the how much of a handicap the word gap was. One person said that both her parents talked to her considerably but often in commands rather than in two-way conversations. She wondered if talking to kids invariably requires giving a lot of such warnings and commands. While the speaker in our video didn't dig into this question, many psychologists have advised parents that even when they need to sternly warn children about hazards, they can follow up with open-ended questions and dis-

cussion.

Another Mensan told us that he lived in an extended family, some of whose members were first-generation Americans, and so he regularly listened to and talked with younger and older adults in his home. He mentioned that he had benefited a good deal from these conversations. Dr. Hart and Dr. Risley didn't examine extended families in their study, but presumably multi-generation households give kids more chances to talk seriously with adults and to learn.

Someone else in our group mentioned that her parents had different conversational styles and said this probably helped her to learn to read widely and, later, to converse ably with different groups within Mensa. She also said that she was perceptive enough to learn from television shows. But another person stated that his parents made no special effort to talk with him as a child and that he lived before Sesame Street, yet

he learned to read very well by visiting the library.

All in all, our small group seemed to have learned to read well with modest help from the adults in their family. Of course, this doesn't refute Hart and Risley's conclusions, but it might suggest that there are other people - perhaps older brothers and sisters, perhaps television personalities, perhaps neighbors, friends, or mentors - who can make a difference.

THE JANUARY DINNER:

Jerry Brooker will speak about his recent trip to Syrian refugee camps in Jordan and present a slide show of his photos of the camps. Jerry will also ask us some questions taken from his short talk "The Journey from Ordinary to Extraordinary," which he delivered to Sunni Muslim medical professionals who worked in the refugee camps.

COMMENTARY

by Jerry Brooker

While it is not consoling to remember the sadness of a year ago when the children were killed at the Sandy Hook Elementary School, the actions of the teachers on that day beckon us to a heart-felt observance of the greatness of teachers. "I need you to know that I love you," one of the teachers was heard to say. Be certain that these are the words, both spoken and implied, that millions of teachers say to their students each day.

There is a greatness in the profession of teachers, as they have the most fundamental impact on each of us. Without them, we would not write, we would not read, both the foundation blocks of other contributions we make.

Yet, their impact goes beyond the art and craft of their profession. Some would say that they have the power to affect the hearts and minds of their students beyond the classroom. Many years ago, for example, I had a very talented student who died soon after completing high school. His father called me aside at his funeral to tell me that his son had selected an essay he

wrote in my class years before to be buried with him. In it, I had affirmed his talent and urged him to be responsible for his gift. That little note would now go with him across the Great Divide. His gesture was a great gift to me, the understanding that I, and all teachers, have the power to affect the minds and hearts of our students for a long time. Some would even say into eternity.

The Sandy Hook children who died that day were our link to joy, to possibility, to innocence. They are now of mythical proportions. Indeed, they are the symbolic sons and daughters of us all, forever imprinted on our national psyche. "I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep," the poet says. The saddest part of the tragedy is that our twenty angels were not able to keep their promises before they went to sleep.

When I think of the six fallen teachers from our beloved Newtown, I am certain, that they went beyond affecting their students' hearts and minds into eternity. Because of who they are and what they did that December morning, they actually escorted their students into eternity. No greater love hath anyone.

PUZZLES & QUESTIONS (Answers may be in next month's Chronicle.)

1. What if New York had become the capital of the United States? Philadelphia? Boston? Chicago? Hartford, CT?
2. What is the saltiest sea on earth? What is the saltiest ocean?
3. How often do you lose track of the time?
4. Name the civil wars currently being fought in the world.
5. About how much meat in weight does the average person in the U.S. eat in a year?
6. What was the first university to have an M.B.A. program?
7. Which nations industrialized the fastest?
8. How many times can Friday the 13th occur in a year?
9. Give some recent examples of serendipity.
10. According to Census data, about what is the population density of each of these Fairfield County cities - Greenwich, Stamford, Norwalk, Danbury, and Bridgeport?
11. How hard is it to make good historical analogies?
12. Name the writer or composer of each of these classic American songs: "Yankee Doodle Dandy", "On Top of Old Smokey", "Buffalo Gals", "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot", "Oh, My Darlin' Clementine", and "Goodnight Irene".
13. Who have been the most artful boxers in professional boxing history?
14. What percentage of National Football League kickoffs last season (2012 - 2013) resulted in touchbacks (i.e., the receiving team did not attempt to run the kickoff back)? What percentage of kickoffs were touchbacks during the 2004 - 2005 season?

PUZZLES & QUESTIONS ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:

2. How many nations fought in World War I?
A: About 35 nations. The Allies or Entente Powers comprised about 28 nations (counting the United Kingdom as one nation, although it included Canada, India, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Rhodesia). The Central Powers comprised about 7 nations (the Austria-Hungarian Empire included many territories, as did the German Empire).
4. How do the Dow Jones average, the S&P 500, and the NASDAQ Composite Index differ in how they weight stocks in their indexes?
A: The Dow Jones Composite Average is an index of 65 large publicly owned companies. The index is price weighted - it is calculated as the sum of the prices of the stocks divided by a divisor that originally was the number

of companies in the index, but has been adjusted downward to account for stock splits and spinoffs. Because of the Dow Index's weighting, higher-priced stocks influence it more. So a \$1 change in the price of any stock has the same effect, although such a change would be more important for a \$10 stock than for a \$1 stock. A \$1 increase in any one stock now moves the index about 6.42 points.

The NASDAQ, which began in 1971, is an index of all the common stocks and securities traded on the NASDAQ (National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations) stock market. There are over 3,000 stocks, disproportionately tech companies, now listed on NASDAQ. The NASDAQ Composite Index is capitalization-weighted - each company is weighted proportionately to its market value, which is its stock price times its number of shares. Because of

NASDAQ's cap-weighting, Apple alone accounts for about 12.5% of the index and the top 10 companies make up about 37% of it.

The S&P 500 (the Standard and Poor 500), which began in 1957, is an index of 500 diverse companies traded on either on the New York Stock Exchange or NASDAQ. Right now, Apple is about 1.9% of the S&P 500 Index's weight.

6. What are the sister cities of Stamford, CT?

A: The sister cities of Stamford, CT (2012 est. pop. 125,109) are 1) Afula, Israel (2011 est. pop. 41,293); 2) Minturno, Italy (2010 est. pop. 19,037); 3) Jajmau, India (2011 est. pop. 652,831); 4) Settefrati, Italy (2008 est. pop. 829); 5) Sparti or Sparta, Greece (2011 est. pop. 35,259); 6) Lima, Peru (2007 est. pop. 7,605,742); and 7) Jiangdu, China (as of 11//2013, a district of Yangzhou, 2010 pop. 4, 414,681).

8. Estimate the populations of these historic European cities: Pisa, Italy; Trento, Italy: 117,317; Versailles, France; Wittenberg, Germany; Corinth, Greece.

A: Pisa, Italy: 85,517; Trento, Italy: Versailles, France: 86,110; Wittenberg, Germany: 49,000; (New) Corinth, Greece: 58,220.

10. Who coined the term "the Third World"?

A: Alfred Sauvy, a French demographer, anthropologist, and historian, coined the term in 1952 to refer to those diverse group of countries, many of whom were former colonies, that were not allies of either of the NATO alliance or the Communist bloc. He first used the phrase in the French weekly news magazine L'Observateur on August 14, 1952.

12. Which Connecticut cities have served as state capital?

A: Hartford and New Haven. New Haven was a co-capital from 1701 until 1873.

14. How many NFL (National Football League) teams have a beast, bird, fish, or insect as their team nickname? How many major league baseball teams do?

A: 15 of the 32 NFL teams have an animal for their nickname (Buffalo Bills, Miami Dolphins, Baltimore Ravens, Cincinnati Bengals, Indianapolis Colts, Jacksonville Jaguars, Denver Broncos, Philadelphia Eagles, Chicago Bears, Detroit Lions, Atlanta Falcons, Carolina Panthers, Arizona Cardinals, St. Louis Rams, and Seattle Seahawks). Only 8 of the 30 MLB teams have an animal for their nickname (Baltimore Orioles, Tampa Bay Rays, Toronto Blue Jays, Detroit Tigers, Florida Marlins, Chicago Cubs, St. Louis Cardinals, and Arizona Diamondbacks).

WORD CHECK

See if you can define these grammatical words.

1. appositive -
2. case -
3. clause -
4. gerund -
5. nominative -
6. participle -
7. predicate -
8. preposition -
9. subjunctive -
10. tense -
11. transitive -
12. verbal -

SYNONYM SENSE

See if you can come up with at least three synonyms or near synonyms for each word. Then see if you can give some antonyms.

1. bright -
2. convene -
3. difficult -
4. fit (adjective) -
5. friendly -
6. honest -
7. hopeful -
8. plain (adjective) -

ANSWERS ON NEXT PAGE

WORD CHECK ANSWERS:

1. appositive - a word or group of words, often set off by commas, that explains or identifies another word in a sentence. Example: Jack, a member of the team, appeared at the dinner.
2. case - a grammatical term which indicates the way a noun or pronoun is used with other words in a sentence. English has three cases: nominative - the case when a noun is used as a subject, objective - the case when a noun is used as an object, and possessive - the case when a noun shows possession.
3. clause - in a sentence, a group of words that has a subject and a predicate.
4. gerund - a verb form (ending in 'ing') that is used as a noun. Example: Painting is an art.
5. nominative - the case of a noun when it is used as the subject of a sentence.
6. participle - a verb form that is used as an adjective. Example: They never heard a discouraging word.
7. predicate - the part of a sentence that makes a statement about a subject, usually by telling what a subject is doing or what is happening to a subject.
8. preposition - a part of speech that shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun and some other word in the sentence. Examples: The coat was on the door. The coat was in the store.
9. subjunctive - a grammatical mood expressing a wish, a condition, or a supposition. Examples: If he were here, he would do it. If you have been there, you know what it is like.
10. tense - a property of a verb showing the time of an action or a state or condition.
11. transitive - (of a verb) taking an object. Example: He threw the ball.
12. verbal - a verb form which is used as an adjective. Example: His performance was thrilling.

SYNONYM SENSE ANSWERS:

1. bright - shining, brilliant, sparkling, glistening, luminous, flashing.
Antonyms: dull, dim, dark, drab, gray, cloudy, obscure, invisible.
2. convene - gather, congregate, meet, assemble, collect, convoke.
Antonyms: disperse, scatter, leave, depart, exit, diffuse, spread, separate, break up.
3. difficult - hard, tough, uneasy, troublesome, onerous, arduous, laborious, uphill, formidable, stubborn, knotty, intractable, daunting, awkward, unmanageable, unwieldy, trying, thorny, complicated.
Antonyms: easy, trouble-free, simple, effortless, undemanding, smooth, facile, tractable.
4. fit - healthy, well, sound, fitting, appropriate, suitable.
Antonyms: unfit, unhealthy, unsound, ill, ailing, weak, floundering, flabby, soft, flaccid, limp, unsuitable, inappropriate.
5. friendly - amicable, amiable, hospitable, welcoming, neighborly, cordial, warmhearted.
Antonyms: unfriendly, hostile, hateful, antagonistic, belligerent.
6. honest - truthful, sincere, candid, veracious, frank, trustworthy, open, upright.
Antonyms: dishonest, lying, deceitful, false, fraudulent, dissembling, crooked, cheating, untrue, insincere, untruthful, untrustworthy.
7. hopeful - hoping, optimistic, buoyant, promising, auspicious, propitious, undespairing.
Antonyms: hopeless, pessimistic, unconfident, desparate, despairing, despondent, forlorn.
8. plain - simple, ordinary, basic, regular, unadorned, down to earth, unremarkable, undistinguished, unvarnished, unornamented, unpretentious.
Antonyms: fancy, handsome, elegant, complicated, ornate, ornamented, decorated, extravagant, luxurious, pretentious.

NOTED & QUOTED

Man is a messenger who forgot the message.
- Abraham Joshua Heschel, (1907 - 1972), Polish-American rabbi, theologian

All a man can betray is his conscience.
- Joseph Conrad, (1857 - 1924), Polish-British novelist and short-story writer

If there is poetry in my book about the sea, it is not because I deliberately put it there, but because no one could write truthfully about the sea and leave out the poetry.
- Rachel Carson, (1907 - 1964), U.S. biologist and writer

Every word was once a poem.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, (1803 - 1882)

You don't become completely free by just avoiding becoming a slave; you also need to avoid becoming a master.
- Nassim Taleb, (1960 -), Lebanese-American derivatives trader, writer, *The Bed of Procrustes* (2013)

I would unite with anybody to do right and with nobody to do wrong. - Frederick Douglass, (1818 - 1895), Afro-American abolitionist, writer

If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough.
- Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, (2005 -), President of Liberia, Harvard Commencement speech, 2011

Nothing's different, but everything has changed.
- Charles de Lint, (1951 -), Canadian fantasy author, folk musician, *The Ivory and the Horn* (1996)

The more things change, the more they stay different.
- Melissa de la Cruz, (1971 -), U.S. novelist

You can see the picture before it's taken; then it's up to you to get the camera to see it.
- James Van DerZee, (1886 - 1983), U.S. photographer

The only valid test of leadership is the ability to lead, and lead vigorously.
- John F. Kennedy, (1917 - 1963), 35th president of the U.S.

Silicon Valley is a mindset, not a location.
- Reid Hoffman, (1967 -), U.S. entrepreneur, venture capitalist, and author

Maybe it's our sky that makes us crazy.
- Kathleen Norris, (1947 -), U.S. poet and farmer, *Dakota*, (1993)

The question of whether a computer can really think is as interesting as the question of whether a submarine can really swim. - Edsger Wybe Dijkstra, (1930 - 2002), Dutch computer scientist

The obstacle is the path. - Zen Saying

There are many paths to the top of the mountain, but only one view. - Chinese proverb

Time is a file that wears and makes no noise.
- English Proverb

The sun is the king of torches.
- West African proverb

Variety is the soul of pleasure. - Aphra Behn, (1640 - 1689), English dramatist, *The Rover* (1681)

Laughter is the mind sneezing. - Wyndham Lewis, (1882 - 1957), English novelist, essayist, critic, and painter

I loathe narcissism, but I approve of vanity.
- Diana Vreeland, (1903 - 1989), U.S. fashion columnist, editor

Kill one, scare a thousand.
- Mao Tse-tung, (1893 - 1976)

I'm not an author, I'm a writer, that's all I am. Authors want their names down in history; I want to keep the smoke coming out of the chimney.
- Mickey Spillane, (1918 - 2006), U.S. crime novelist

The theater is the only branch of art much cared for by people of wealth; like canasta, it does away with the bother of talk after dinner.
- Mary McCarthy, (1912 - 1989), U.S. novelist, critic

As for life, it is a battle and a sojourning in a strange land; but the fame that comes after is oblivion. - Marcus Aurelius, (121 - 180), Stoic philosopher and Roman Emperor (161 - 180), *Meditations*

We insist on believing we are free, even if between two opposite wishes we disclose the best and choose the worst. - Spinoza, (1632 - 1677), Dutch philosopher, *Letter to G. H. Shuller*.

Genius is the ability to escape the human condition; Humanity is the need to escape.- Q. Uim

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MIND GAMES 2013 WINNERS:

Kulami. A tactical marble placement game for 2, where players take turns placing marbles on a configurable board of tiles. The placement of one player’s marble dictates the row or column into which the next marble may be placed. Winning requires domination of the most tiles. It is another simple but clever and well-made game from Fox Mind.

Suburbia. Suburbia is a Euro-style tile laying game for up to 4 players who try to build up a suburb that is both sustainable and supportive of growth. Building parks encourages population growth, but factories generate income. By how best to acquire and place tiles, players may develop the most successful infrastructure.

Kerflip. There are already so many word games that you might think it could be difficult to come up with a new one. But Damon Tabb did it with Kerflip, and it proved to be a winner. A handful of tiles are tossed onto the board, and the sooner a player uses as many letters as possible, the more they win. More fun than you might think!

Ghoost. This is basically a crazy 8 type game but with a more sophisticated mechanic and well-designed cards.

Forbidden Desert. This game is related to a prior-year winner, Forbidden Island. It is a cooperative game, meaning 2 to 5 players work together and try and beat the game.

MENSA MIND GAMES 2014

Austin is the host with the most! Game on! Mind Games(r) 2014 will be held April 18-20 in the Texas capital

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INCOME

American Mensa
 Local Group Support Funds: \$1,521.32
Total Income **\$1,521.32**

EXPENSES

Chronicle Printing Expenses: \$120.17
 Chronicle Postage & Supplies: 64.40
 Testing Expenses: 265.07
 Domain Name: 180.30
 CultureQuest, MeetUp dues: 188.00
TOTAL EXPENSES: **\$817.94**

2nd Quarter Balance 9-30-13 **\$12,456.46**

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BUSINESS OFFICE AMERICAN MENSA, LTD.
1229 Corporate Drive West
Arlington, TX 76006-6103

Phone: 817-607-0060
Fax: 817-649-5232
E-mail: AmericanMensa@mensa.org
Website: www.us.mensa.org

LIST OF SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MENSA OFFICERS

President	Debra Jennings		locsec@rocketmail.com
Vice-President	Jim Mizera	203-522-1959	Jmizera@hotmail.com PMB #181, 7365 Main St. Stratford, CT 06614-1300
Treasurer	Elizabeth Marks Cortright	203-655-9791	reemmm@optonline.net 11 Scout Trail Darien, CT 06820-4323
Secretary	vacant		
Editor	Jim Mizera	203-522-1959	Jmizera@hotmail.com PMB #181, 7365 Main St. Stratford, CT 06614-1300
Publisher	Amy Harold	203-261-6517	amyharold@earthlink.net 110 Bart Road Monroe, CT 06468-1117
Scholarship Chair	Joan Coprio		jcoprio@optonline.net
Web Master	Thomas O'Neill	203-243-4913	doctec2@gmail.com 68 Pierce Ave. Bridgeport, CT 06604-1607
Ombudsman	Gary Oberst	203-853-1810	gary@oberstlaw.com 111 East Ave. Norwalk, CT 06851-5014
Membership Officer	Jim Mizera	203-522-1959	Jmizera@hotmail.com
Reg Vice Chairman	Andrew Heffernan	401-781-3247	rvc1@us.mensa.org http://region1.us.mensa.org